



May 23, 2003

The Honorable Mark Kennedy
United States House of Representatives
1415 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Kennedy:

On behalf of the 350,000 members of the National Taxpayers Union (NTU), I am writing to offer our support for H.R. 1767, the FAST Act. We urge all Members to support this common-sense legislation that would allow states to expand their road capacity without increasing the burden on taxpayers. It is also our belief that such market-driven transportation solutions will be completed more quickly and focused on areas most in need of additional capacity.

Since 1958, the federal government has imposed a prohibition on the collection of fees on the interstate highway system. NTU agrees with this provision and will continue to oppose higher taxes of any kind on interstate highways, however this legislation will not force interstate users to pay new fees; instead states will be allowed to create new capacity and allow drivers to choose to pay for its use. By mandating the use of non-cash electronic technology, the FAST Act will ensure that drivers benefit from the best, most up-to-date tolling technology that will speed drivers to their destinations rather than forcing them to sit at tolling stations, as is so often the case.

Taxpayers and road users will derive several additional benefits from passage of the FAST Act including: empowerment of states to solve their own transportation problems, shifting road money to maintenance of existing infrastructure, and giving states the flexibility to use pricing mechanisms and innovative solutions that make sense for them. Allowing states to innovate and tailor their transportation solutions to their own needs is bound to create a more efficient, less costly, transportation network that responds more effectively to both change and local needs than the current system.

Thank you for taking the initiative in proposing this innovative piece of legislation. NTU looks forward to working with you in the future on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul J. Gessing". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul J. Gessing
Director of Government Affairs